

28 SEPTEMBER 1961 CHECKLIST (COPY)**1. CHINESE COMMUNISTS FACE ANOTHER POOR HARVEST.**

THIS YEAR'S GRAIN CROP SEEMS LIKELY TO BE NO BETTER THAN LAST YEAR'S, GIVING THEM A THIRD SUCCESSIVE POOR HARVEST. WITH MORE MOUTHS TO FEED, PEIPING MAY BE FORCED TO EXPAND ITS ALREADY SUBSTANTIAL GRAIN IMPORTS IN THE COMING YEAR IF IT HOPES TO HEAD OFF FURTHER DAMAGE TO HEALTH, PRODUCTIVITY AND MORALE.

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2. DE GAULLE VIEWS ALGERIA AS "EXPLOSIVE".

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HE TOLD A GROUP OF FRENCH SOCIALIST LEADERS TWO DAYS AGO THAT HE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED TO SEE NEW EUROPEAN-MOSLEM VIOLENCE IN WHICH "LARGE NUMBERS" ARE KILLED. HOWEVER, HE IS STILL HOPING FOR A SETTLEMENT BY YEAR'S END--PREFERABLY BY SETTING UP A PROVISIONAL ALGERIAN EXECUTIVE BODY WITH MOSLEM PARTICIPATION, BUT BY PARTITION IF NECESSARY. DE GAULLE EVIDENTLY BROUGHT UP WITH THE SOCIALISTS A PLAN, WHICH HE TOUCHED ON IN HIS 5 SEPTEMBER PRESS CONFERENCE, FOR CREATING A 50,000-MAN MOSLEM FORCE TO SUPPORT THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT.

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3. CONGO.

THE UN-KATANGA NEGOTIATIONS IN ELISABETHVILLE ARE STILL IN THE FEELING-OUT STAGE. THE KATANGANS HAVE NOT YET RELAXED THEIR DEMANDS, WHICH INCLUDE TOTAL UN WITHDRAWAL. HOWEVER, THE CHIEF UN NEGOTIATOR NOW PROFESSES OPTIMISM THAT TSHOMBE, WHO YESTERDAY CALLED FOR A MEETING WITH ADOULA, CAN BE BROUGHT AROUND IF HE IS GIVEN A HIGH POST IN THE LEOPOLDVILLE GOVERNMENT.

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4. NOTES.

ANOTHER MEETING OF THE THREE LAOTIAN PRINCES NOW SEEMS LIKELY

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BEFORE TOO LONG AS A RESULT OF THE VIENTIANE GROUP'S RELAXATION OF ITS INSISTENCE ON LUANG PRABANG AS THE SITE. AMBASSADOR BROWN'S MOST RECENT MEETING WITH PHOUMI FOUND THE LATTER TAKING, FOR THE MOMENT AT LEAST, A MORE LENIENT VIEW TOWARD A SOUVANNA-HEADED GOVERNMENT.

5. WATCH COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS--27 SEPTEMBER 1961

NO SINO-SOVIET BLOC COUNTRY INTENDS TO INITIATE DIRECT MILITARY ACTION IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

NOTE: THE USSR HAS TAKEN CERTAIN STEPS TO IMPROVE ITS MILITARY STRENGTH AND PREPAREDNESS WHILE MAINTAINING AN APPEARANCE OF WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT ON BERLIN.

6. SOUTH VIETNAM.

FURTHER COMMUNIST VIET CONG ATTACKS BY BATTALION-SIZE UNITS PRESENT THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM WITH AN EXPANDING CHALLENGE AND PROBABLY FORESHADOW AN INTENSIFIED MILITARY EFFORT BY THE VIET CONG TO UNDERMINE THE GOVERNMENT.

7. REVOLT IN SYRIA.

EARLY THIS MORNING ELEMENTS OF THE UAR FIRST (SYRIAN) ARMY SEIZED CONTROL OF THE DAMASCUS RADIO AND THE DAMASCUS AIRPORT AND BROADCAST A NUMBER OF COMMUNIQUEES CLAIMING THAT A NEW "REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT" HAD TAKEN OVER CONTROL OF ALL SYRIA. BROADCASTS CLAIMED THAT UAR VICE PRESIDENT AMIR, NASIR'S VICEROY IN SYRIA, AND FIRST ARMY COMMANDER GENERAL FAYSAL HAD BEEN ARRESTED, AND THAT THE COUP GROUP, IDENTIFIED AS THE "SUPREME ARAB REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND OF THE ARMED FORCES," HAD RECEIVED MESSAGES OF SUPPORT FROM A NUMBER OF FIRST ARMY UNITS.

SUBSEQUENTLY, HOWEVER, THE FIRST ARMY GARRISON AT ALEPPO WAS BROADCASTING A DENIAL THAT IT HAD GIVEN THE DAMASCUS GROUP ITS SUPPORT, AND A LATE COMMUNIQUE FROM THE REBEL GROUP IN DAMASCUS SAID THE "PROBLEM OF THE ARMY" HAD BEEN SUBMITTED TO AMIR, AND HE HAD TAKEN MEA-

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SURES TO SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS IN THE "INTERESTS OF THE ARMY AND THE UAR."

WHETHER OR NOT THE DAMASCUS COUP HAS IN FACT BEEN A SHORT-LIVED ONE, NASIR'S PROBLEMS IN SYRIA ARE NOT OVER. SYRIAN DISCONTENT WITH EGYPT'S DOMINATION OF THE UAR HAS LONG POSED A THREAT TO NASIR'S CONTROL OF THE UAR'S NORTHERN REGION. ANY MEDIATION EFFORTS BY AMIR ARE LIKELY TO END IN SOME CONCESSIONS TO SYRIAN AUTONOMY IF FURTHER VIOLENCE IS TO BE AVOIDED.

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THE US CONSULATE GENERAL IN DAMASCUS UNDERSTANDS THAT THE ACTUAL EXECUTION OF THE COUP WAS CARRIED OUT BY BRIGADIER DUHMAN (COMMANDER OF THE QATANA GARRISON, 20 MILES SOUTHWEST OF DAMASCUS) AND REPORTED THAT AS OF 0900 LOCAL TIME THE SITUATION WAS CALM FOLLOWING AN EARLY MORNING HALF-HOUR FIGHT.

THE GROUP'S PRONOUNCEMENTS HAVE NOT MENTIONED NASIR BY NAME NOR DECLARED AN INTENTION TO DISSOLVE THE EGYPTIAN-SYRIAN UNION. ONE COMMUNIQUE, HOWEVER, STATES THAT THE MOVEMENT HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT BY "THE STRUGGLING ARAB PEOPLE IN SYRIA AND EGYPT REPEAT AND EGYPT," SUGGESTING THE GROUP MAY HAVE HOPED THAT IT WOULD RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM ITS MILITARY COUNTERPARTS IN EGYPT. THE UAR SECOND (EGYPTIAN) ARMY IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED WHOLLY LOYAL TO THE NASIR REGIME.

THE SYRIAN GROUP PROCLAIMED FROM THE BEGINNING THAT THE MOVEMENT WAS NOT UNDERTAKEN IN THE NAME OF ANY INDIVIDUAL. NO MENTION HAS BEEN MADE OF UAR VICE PRESIDENT ABD AL-HAMID SARRAJ, FORMER SYRIAN STRONG MAN WHOSE RESIGNATION ON 26 SEPTEMBER SET THE STAGE FOR THE REVOLT.

NO SIGNIFICANT REACTIONS HAVE BEEN NOTED AS YET FROM OTHER ARAB STATES OR ISRAEL. BOTH KING HUSSAYN OF JORDAN AND IRAQI PRIME MINISTER QASIM, HOWEVER, WOULD PROBABLY WELCOME THE BLOW THAT NASIR'S PRESTIGE

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WOULD SUFFER FROM A DISSOLUTION OF THE UAR AND WOULD NOT BE ABOVE
RENDERING SUPPORT TO SYRIAN SEPARATISM. ISRAEL

IS UNLIKELY TO

INTERFERE UNLESS A SPREAD OF MILITARY ACTIVITY THREATENS ITS SECURITY.